

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 11158

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, UNRWA, PLO, XF

SUBJECT: UNRWA ADVISORY COMMISSION AND PLO

REF: (A) STATE 62405; (B) STATE 208753; (C) BEIRUT 11156

1. SLIGHT STIR WAS CREATED JUST PRIOR TO SEPT 4 ADCOM MEETING WITH ARRIVAL OF TWO PLO DELEGATES (HEADED BY TEWFID SAFADI OF PLO'S HIGHER POLITICAL COMMITTEE FOR PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON) WHO BEGAN TO SEARCH FOR PLACE AT COMMISSION TABLE. WHEN COMGEN AND OTHER AGENCY OFFICIALS NOTICED THEIR PRESENCE, COMGEN INTERCEPTED PLO DELEGATES AND INFORMED THEM THAT THEY HAVE NO RPT NO STATUS ON ADCOM AND CONSEQUENTLY NO RPT NO PLACE ALLOTTED THEM AROUND TABLE. TWO INTERLOPERS THEREUPON DEPARTED BUILDING WITHOUT OBJECTION AND, AS FAR AS WE AWARE, NONE RPT NONE OF ARAB HOST COUNTRY DELEGATIONS PROTESTED THEIR DISMISSAL.

2. USG REP (HOWELL) WAS MADE AWARE OF INCIDENT JUST AS MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER (DETAILS PARA 1 ABOVE GATHERED DURING COFFEE BREAK FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF COMGEN'S DRAFT REPORT). WHEN HE FIRST LEARNED OF POSSIBLE PLO PRESENCE IN HALL, HE MANAGED TO TALK BRIEFLY WITH UNRWA GENERAL COUNSEL (HEENAN) WHO CONFIRMED INCIDENT BUT SAID THAT NO RPT NO PLO DELEGATES REMAINED IN HALL AFTER SEESION CALLED TO ORDER. NEVERTHELESS, USG REP NOTICED TWO PERSONS SITTING WITH SYRIAN REPRESENTATIVE

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WHOSE NAMES WERE NOT RPT NOT INCLUDED ON PROVISIONAL

LIST OF DELEGATES CIRCULATED BEFORE MEETING AND WHOM USG REP COULD NOT RPT NOT IDENTIFY. POSSIBILITY (SUBSEQUENTLY DISPROVED) REMAINED, THEREFORE, THAT REP OF PLO WAS IN FACT SITTING AT CONFERENCE TABLE AND WOULD SEEK TO ADDRESS COMMISSION DURING DISCUSSION OF COMGEN'S DRAFT REPORT.

3. FOLLOWING COMGEN'S OPENING REMARKS IN AMPLIFICATION OF HIS DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT, ONLY EGYPTIAN DELEGATE SPOKE ON BEHALF OF ARAB HOST COUNTRIES. LIKE HIS BRITISH COUNTERPART, USG REP HAD PREPARED REMARKS, INCORPORATING POINTS FROM PARA 1, REFTEL B, BUT DID NOT RPT NOT ADDRESS ADCOM PENDING POSSIBILITY THAT PLO MIGHT SEEK SPEAK IN ITS OWN RIGHT OR ONE OF ARAB HOST COUNTRIES MIGHT INTRODUCE RESOLUTION CALLING FOR PLO PARTICIPATION IN SOME CAPACITY. SINCE NO DELEGATION EXPRESSED DESIRE TO SPEAK ON SUBJECT OF DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT, CHAIRMAN (AMBASSADOR OF JORDAN) DECLARED DISCUSSION CLOSED AFTER SINGLE INTERVENTION BY EGYPTIAN REP.

4. DURING SUBSEQUENT BREAK, USG REP TALKED WITH COMGEN AND OTHER AGENCY HEADQUARTERS PERSONNEL. COMGEN WAS MOST EMBARRASSED BY INCIDENT AND EXPRESSED OPINION THAT PLO APPEARANCE RESULTED FROM "MISUNDERSTANDING" OF SOME KIND, PERHAPS RELATED TO RECENT MEETINGS OF ARAB HOST COUNTRIES DELEGATES, PREPARATORY TO ADCOM SESSION, IN WHICH PLO PARTICIPATES. THIS EXPLANATION IS PLAUSIBLE AND WE CERTAINLY HAVE NO FACTUAL BASIS ON WHICH TO QUESTION IT. WE FIND IT EQUALLY LIKELY, HOWEVER, THAT PLO ENTRANCE WAS MEANS OF TESTING THE WATERS RE REACTION TO PLO PARTICIPATION. IF SO, PLO NOW KNOWS THERE NO RPT NO EASY WAY INTO ADCOM FORUM. ASSUMING THEY HAVE REAL INTEREST IN ADCOM PARTICIPATION--AN ASSUMPTION THAT IS OPEN TO DEBATE--THE PLO NOW KNOWS THAT POSITIVE ACTION OF PART OF ADCOM MUST PRECEDE THEIR PARTICIPATION IN ANY CAPACITY.
GODLEY

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